

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Amend the claims as follows:

1.(original) A process for preparing aromatic dicarboxylic acids which comprises subjecting an aromatic compound having an alkyl substituent or a partially oxidized alkyl substituent to liquid-phase oxidation with a molecular oxygen-containing gas in a reaction solvent in the presence of a catalyst, then conducting solid-liquid separation of the formed slurry containing crystals of the produced aromatic dicarboxylic acid, and recovering the crystals, wherein in carrying out solid-liquid separation by continuously supplying the said slurry to a screen-type centrifugal separator having a screw conveyor arranged therein, a screen with an opening size that allows partial escape of crystals in the supplied slurry through the screen openings is used as the screen of the screen-type centrifugal separator.

2.(original) The process according to claim 1 wherein a screen with an opening size that allows escape of an amount equivalent to 1 to 10% by weight of crystals in the supplied slurry is used as the screen of the screen-type centrifugal separator.

3.(currently amended) The process according to claim 1 using a screen-type centrifugal separator having an outer rotating cylinder-(1), a screw conveyor (2) comprising a cylindrical rotating shaft (21)-and a screw (22)-and arranged to be capable of relative rotation in said outer rotating cylinder, and a slurry supply pipe (3)-disposed in

the inside of the rotating shaft of said screw conveyor and adapted to supply the slurry to the inside of said rotating shaft, said screw conveyor ~~(2)~~ having provided at a part on its proximal end side a slurry supply port ~~(23)~~ for supplying the slurry to the outer rotating cylinder ~~(1)~~, said outer rotating cylinder ~~(1)~~ consisting of a large-diameter portion ~~(11)~~ on the proximal end side, a slant portion ~~(12)~~ gradually reduced in diameter, and a small-diameter portion ~~(13)~~ provided with a screen ~~(13a)~~, said large-diameter portion ~~(11)~~ having formed at its proximal end an overflow port ~~(4)~~, and said small-diameter portion ~~(13)~~ having at its fore end a solid discharge port ~~(5)~~.

4.(currently amended) The process according to claim 3 wherein the inside of rotating shaft ~~(21)~~ of the screw conveyor is partitioned into a slurry supply portion ~~(21a)~~ on the proximal end side and a cleaning fluid supply portion ~~(21b)~~ on the frontal end side, said slurry supply portion ~~(21a)~~ being designed to be capable of supplying the slurry through slurry supply pipe ~~(3)~~, said cleaning fluid supply portion ~~(21b)~~ being designed to be capable of supplying a cleaning fluid to the inside of slurry supply pipe ~~(3)~~ through a cleaning fluid supply pipe ~~(6)~~, and said screw conveyor ~~(2)~~ having provided at a part on its frontal end side a cleaning fluid supply port ~~(24)~~ for supplying the cleaning fluid to the small-diameter portion ~~(13)~~ of the outer rotating cylinder ~~(1)~~.

5.(original) The process according to claim 1 wherein the residence time for the solid-liquid separation on the screen is set to be 2 to 20 seconds, provided that in case

where a cleaning fluid supply port is provided, the residence time is the time after the slurry has passed the cleaning fluid supplied area, and a centrifugal force of 300 to 5,000 G is exerted on the screen.

6.(original) The process according to claim 1 wherein the average grain size of crystals in the slurry is 80 to 160 μm .

7.(original) The process according to claim 6 wherein when the average grain size of crystals in the slurry is B (μm), the opening size of the screen is not less than (B – 10) μm and not more than (B + 80) μm .

8.(new) The process according to claim 1 wherein a screen with an opening size that allows escape of an amount equivalent to 1 to 40% by weight of crystals in the supplied slurry is used as the screen of the screen-type centrifugal separator.

9.(new) The process according to claim 1 wherein a screen with an opening size that allows escape of an amount equivalent to 1 to 20% by weight of crystals in the supplied slurry is used as the screen of the screen-type centrifugal separator.